

Weekly Column for September 1st

As September approaches we have a very exciting event next week that I would like to invite all Troy residents to attend.

During its Annual Alumni ceremony this year, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute will induct Garnet Douglass Baltimore into its Hall of Fame on Friday, September 9th. The City of Troy is joining in the celebration of Garnet Douglass Baltimore's life by ceremonially renaming a portion of 8th Street in honor of the first African American to earn a bachelor's degree from RPI.

Baltimore's list of achievements is quite long, and has contributed greatly to life in New York State, particularly in the City of Troy. As a consulting engineer for thirty years, Baltimore helped design one of the grandest cemeteries in the world- Oakwood Cemetery.

However, for Troy residents, he will best be known as the designer of Prospect Park. One of our greatest treasures, this turn of the century urban recreational area is still utilized by Troy residents to this day, despite it being built more than 100 years ago. With its rolling hills, unique views, and wonderful atmosphere, Prospect Park is a lasting legacy left to us by the brilliance of Garnet Douglass Baltimore.

I recently sent out a letter inviting numerous dignitaries to the unveiling, and in that letter, I quote an article from the Record that I thought best described Baltimore, at least the man I have learned about.

"He was born here, educated here, practiced here, served the public here, died here. He represented Troy; he helped develop it, he bet on it from birth to death."

On September 8th at 10 a.m. we will unveil a new sign proclaiming a portion of 8th Street near the RPI campus as Garnet Douglass Baltimore Street. Members of his family will attend the event, as will local leaders, and RPI President Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson. It is a great honor for a great man, and I hope that all of you can attend.

Harry J Tutunjian
Mayor of Troy